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Economic and Social Council

Provisional

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Organizational session for 2011

Provisional summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 15 February 2011, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Kapambwe ..... (Zambia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*) (E/2011/1 and E/2011/2; E/2011/L.1)

1. **The President** said that while some parts of the developing world had experienced a strong rebound from recession, unemployment remained high in Europe, Japan and the United States of America. The world economy must therefore be monitored vigilantly. In that connection, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would shortly provide a briefing on the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2011*, which had just been published. Furthermore, since high food prices had returned, speedy action was needed to alleviate suffering in the short term and to increase resilience to price swings in the long term. Experts would discuss that crisis later in the week.

2. Other activities during the session would include a briefing on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 64/289 and a meeting between the Bureau of the Council and the chairs of the functional commissions. The Council must also choose themes for the post-2011 annual ministerial reviews. Moreover, the forthcoming special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development would provide a good opportunity to build on the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development.

3. The Bureau had reached agreement with regard to its division of responsibilities for the 2011 substantive session. He himself would conduct the high-level segment, the dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions and the conclusion of the work of the 2011 substantive session; Mr. Momen (Bangladesh), Vice-President, would conduct the coordination segment; Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru), Vice-President, would conduct the operational activities segment; Mr. Grauls (Belgium), Vice-President, would conduct the humanitarian affairs segment; and Mr. Koterec (Slovakia), Vice-President, would conduct the general segment.

4. **Mr. Sha** Zukang (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that preparations by his Department for the annual ministerial review were firmly on track. In addition to the basic programme of work, the Council should pay particular attention to the food crisis. Volatile food prices could threaten progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and exacerbate social and political tensions. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs had analysed the impact of the food security crisis on development and had produced background papers on the linkages between rising food prices and the Council's agenda.

5. The world was still feeling the aftershocks of the global financial and economic crisis. Millions had been pushed into extreme poverty, unemployment remained high and the hard-won gains made towards achieving the Goals were at risk. The central role of the United Nations in global economic governance must therefore be urgently reaffirmed.

6. Through such publications as the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2011*, his Department could help support the Council's work on global economic governance by identifying issues that required effective policy coordination among Member States.

7. The Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries would be held shortly in Istanbul. With improved domestic policies and increased international commitment, half of those countries could graduate from least developed country status by 2020. The Council's deliberations could make a valuable contribution towards that process.

8. As Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio in 2012, he welcomed the Council's contributions to the preparations for the Conference. Member States had agreed that the Conference would focus on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and an institutional framework for sustainable development. Experience showed that a properly managed green transition could advance development goals.

9. The current year would provide an opportunity for the Council to reinvigorate the political commitment to sustainable development. Short-sighted responses and sector-based approaches were no longer sufficient to tackle the challenges faced. His Department's efforts to address social, economic and environmental challenges in an integrated manner could help the Council to shape durable solutions to those issues.

10. **Mr. Kőrösi** (Hungary), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Council had done commendable work in 2010 and had contributed decisively to the preparations and successful outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the areas of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

11. In 2011, the Council must act as a catalyst to United Nations efforts to achieve the Goals in a sustainable manner, particularly in those countries lagging the furthest behind or facing fragility constraints.

12. The format of the special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should be conducive to interactive and dynamic discussions. In that regard, the President of the Council should encourage participants to deliver short written statements, which should be submitted well in advance of the meeting in order to facilitate fruitful exchanges.

Basic programme of the work of the Council
(E/2011/1)

13. **Ms. de Laurentis** (Secretary of the Council) drew attention to corrections to the basic programme of work of the Council for 2011, as contained in chapter I of document E/2011/1.

14. Under agenda item 6 (b), "Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010", the annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme would not be considered by the Council in July 2011. Instead, it would be submitted to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held from 9 to 13 May 2011, as requested by the Council in its resolution 2010/27.

15. Under agenda item 13 (a), "Sustainable development", the report of the Secretary-General on the 10-year appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 had been included erroneously and should therefore be deleted.

16. Under agenda item 13 (g), "Public administration and development", the report of the Secretary-General on the process towards enhanced cooperation on international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet should instead be listed under the documentation for agenda item 13 (b), "Science and technology for development".

17. Lastly, under agenda item 14 (g), "Human rights", the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children would no longer be considered by the Council. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/146, the report would be submitted only to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

18. The President said that in 2011, the coordination segment would consider gender equity and the empowerment of women. It was proposed that agenda item 7 (e), "Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system", considered annually by the Council, should be considered during the coordination segment. It was also proposed that the item on financing for development and the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination should again be considered during the coordination segment. Those arrangements would be reflected in the proposed programme of work for the substantive session.

19. Issues pending from 2010 included consideration before the 2011 substantive session of the report on the ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration; the submission, by March 2011, of a report by the Secretary-General on strengthening institutional arrangements to promote international cooperation in tax matters and a discussion on that subject within the Council by spring 2011; continued consideration of the draft resolution entitled "Establishment of an ad hoc panel of experts on the world financial and economic crisis and its impact on development", with a view to making final recommendations to the General Assembly; and the Council's consideration of the first two draft resolutions contained in chapter I, section B, of the addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2010/15/Add.1), deferred to its substantive session of 2011.

20. With reference to the review of the distribution of seats on the Executive Board of the World Food Programme, all constituencies had agreed to

recommend that the current distribution and rotation pattern should be maintained. He recalled that the Council would shortly need to endorse the decision taken to that effect by the Executive Board so that the General Assembly could take action by early March.

21. Lastly, he noted that the Permanent Mission of Ukraine had submitted a response to the proposed amendment by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to article 49, paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 (e) of the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by its 1975 Protocol, and that the Permanent Mission of Ecuador had submitted a second communication on the matter.

22. **Mr. Archondo** (Observer for the Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that it was important to reappraise the custom of coca leaf chewing with a view to its decriminalization. In the year and a half since his country's amendment had been proposed, objections from many countries had been received. The possibility of convening an international conference on the Convention might be discussed. A facilitation process to resolve the problem during the current year was desirable.

23. **The President**, welcoming the facilitation proposal, said that he and the Bureau would conduct relevant consultations and keep the Council members duly informed.

24. *It was so decided.*

The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 12.05 p.m.

25. **The President** drew attention to the draft proposals submitted by the President of the Council and members of the Bureau on the basis of informal consultations held pursuant to paragraph 2 (I) of Council decision 1988/77 (E/2011/L.1).

Draft decision I: Proposed date of the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

26. *Draft decision I was adopted.*

Draft decision II: Provisional agenda for the substantive session of 2011 of the Economic and Social Council

27. *Draft decision II, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

Draft decision III: Basic programme of work of the Economic and Social Council for 2012

28. *Draft decision III was adopted.*

Draft decision IV: Working arrangements for the substantive session of 2011 of the Economic and Social Council

29. *Draft decision IV was adopted.*

Draft decision V: Operational activities segment of the 2011 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

30. *Draft decision V was adopted.*

31. **The President** said that informal consultations would be held on draft decisions VI, VII and VIII.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.